

MANAGERS REPORT
March 29, 2011

TO: MAYOR HORNADAY / HOMER CITY COUNCIL

FROM: WALT WREDE

UPDATES / FOLLOW-UP

1. Long Term Parking Plan / Homer Spit / Port and Harbor Area: This meeting agenda contains a resolution approving a long term parking plan in the Port and Harbor area. There are several things that should be mentioned. First, the Memorandum to the Council states that the Port and Harbor Commission made recommendations on a long term parking plan but it did not have a quorum in order to take a formal vote at its meeting on February 23. This issue should be addressed by the time the Council meets. The Commission has a meeting scheduled the week of March 21st and hopefully they will have a quorum and be able to pass motions. A second consideration might be the Draft Spit Comprehensive Plan. The Spit Comprehensive Plan was scheduled to be on the agenda for approval at this meeting but was pushed back due to delays in finalizing the maps. The Long Term Parking Plan appears to be consistent with the Spit Comprehensive Plan but it could be argued that maybe they should go forward together. There is urgency to get the parking plan in place before this summer though. Finally, if the parking plan is approved, we will come back to Council later with an ordinance appropriating money for implementation (signage, etc.) and a resolution establishing the fees for long term parking.
2. SB 46 Capital Budget: Last week the Senate held its first hearing on the capital budget. This was a hearing on the Governor's capital budget as submitted to the legislature. The Senate is now working on its own version of the budget and we are told that we can expect to see it later this month or early in April. As you know, the governor's budget does not contain the gas pipeline or any of the other City CIP projects. They will have to be added by the legislature. The City staff attempted to make sure the word about the hearing got out to key parties advocating for the pipeline around the South Peninsula. We got a good coalition together and the Senate received testimony in favor of the pipeline from the City of Homer, Kachemak City, South Peninsula Hospital, Task Force member Mike Pate, The Kenai Peninsula Borough, and the Kenai Peninsula School District.
3. Boatyard Fire: Last week there was a major fire at the Homer Boat Yard that involved large property losses. Fortunately, no one was injured. Homer and KESA firefighters were faced with a very dangerous scene and they did an excellent job under the circumstances. The lack of fire hydrants on Kachemak Drive really hindered the firefighting effort and I am told that more property might have been saved if hydrants were available closer to the scene. This points out again how important the Kachemak Drive Water and Sewer Project is. Property owners along kachemak Drive could save money on property insurance

- if they had fire hydrants close by. The boatyard owner, Mr. Moore, informs me that he may have to close down the entire operation if he does not get access to sewer lines soon.
4. Gas Pipeline Public Information: At the last meeting, the Council passed a resolution which included instructions for the staff to ramp up the public information campaign regarding the gas pipeline. The process has begun. Attached is a copy of a Q and A which now appears on a new gas line webpage. The staff recently worked to get key players to testify on a capital budget hearing. A new ad has been placed in the papers directing people to the City website if they want more information on the proposed gas line. This week, a staff member posted flyers around town and went to visit key business owners to discuss the project.
 5. Library Energy Consumption: Attached is a letter from Brian Meissner, the architect for the new Homer Public Library. Brian wrote this letter in response to a recent Opinion Piece in the Homer Tribune. The key points are that the Library is more efficient than other similar buildings, that it achieved efficiency goals, that it can be made more efficient due to its design as a “hybrid” building, that the design took more into consideration than just energy efficiency, and that current consternation about energy costs are not entirely a LEED issue, in fact LEED has little to do with it. The suggestions included at the end of Brian’s piece target the exact work the City is already doing through its contract with Bill Smith.
 6. HERC / Old Intermediate School. The Draft Request for Proposals has now been revised based upon comments from both the City Attorney and the Appraisal company under contract to conduct the required appraisal. The appraisal has been performed and we now have a reasonable idea of what fair market rent might be for the facility. A recent appraisal is required by the City code as a precondition to sale or lease. We anticipate that the RFP will be issued and available to the public this week or next. The College has informed me that although they have begun the process of moving out of the facility, they will need to remain for the full term of their lease which expires at the end of April.
 7. Potential Land Sales: At one of the meetings in April, I will bring forward resolutions authorizing the sale of several pieces of City property. First, I plan to make another attempt at selling the lots the City owns behind the seawall. Further, new interest has been expressed in the old library lot located on Main Street. I hope to have that lot sold before the summer. Doing so would get another lot on the tax rolls, maybe stimulate some development, and help the City pay down its debt on the new library.
 8. Revisions to Standard Land Leases: You will recall that the Council asked the City Attorney to review the standard, base land lease and make recommendations regarding possible amendments. Tom has completed his work and staff members are currently in the process of making comments. This process has not moved as quickly as we hoped due to the workload and other more pressing priorities. We plan to have something to Council in April for your review and approval. The attorney has suggested that it would be advisable to wait until a new lease document is in place before executing agreements with tenants. Three tenants are awaiting new leases at this time.

9. Fire Department Training: All reports indicate that the first training session at the new fire training facility went very well.
10. Emergency Operations Plans Debriefings: There were a number of meetings, at several levels, which took place over the past two weeks to debrief what went right and what went wrong during the recent tsunami warning. The focus has been on what we can all do collectively to improve the level of protection and service provided to the public. We have spent a lot of time locally talking about improving emergency communications within the community. Please let me know if you wish to talk about this topic in more detail.
11. Kachemak Drive Water and Sewer: Carey is moving forward with the new engineers estimate and seeking new bids. He is planning to pull together some neighborhood meetings to provide updates on the project, including the significance of the resolution the Council passed at the last meeting.
12. Audit: The audit work for Fiscal Year 2010 is nearing completion. The auditors spent two full weeks here and left this past Friday. Council will receive a copy of the final audit document when its complete along with a presentation by the auditors.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Natural Gas: Frequently Asked Questions
2. Letter from Brian Meissner, Architect for Homer Public Library
3. Homer Projects, Revision 15, STIP
4. 2010 US Census